




Developmental Milestones of Preschool Children

**Are They on
Track?**

Agenda

- Introduction
- Review of Essential Questions & Session Objectives
- Identification of Leading Theorists
- Developmental Pathways
- *Activity One*
- BREAK (10 Min)
- Red Flags 
- Developmental Screeners
- *Activity Two*
- BREAK (10 Min)
- There's a delay. Now What?
- Wrap Up
- Resources and Support

Essential Questions

- How can we ensure that preschool aged children are making adequate progress using established developmental milestones?
- What are the red flags that we should look for when determining whether preschool aged children are not making adequate progress?

Session Objectives

Participants will know the developmental milestones for 3, 4, and 5 year olds:

- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills
- Language and thinking skills
- Social emotional learning

As well as developmental milestone red flags

Leading Theorists in Children's Growth & Development

- **Piaget** – Jean Piaget is regarded as a “Constructivist.” Offered the theory that children learn by fitting together what they already know.
- **Gesell** - Arnold Gesell's theory is concerned with the physical development of children. Observed hundreds of children and came up with physical developmental age norms. These age norms give us a standard by which to monitor a child's development.
- **Erikson** – Erik Erikson's theory is about how individual growth is entwined with social factors and events. Society helps us develop skills that in return make us more mature.
- **Vygotsky** – Lev Semionovich Vygotsky also regarded as a Constructivist. His theory of human development hinges on what he termed the “*Zone of Proximal Development*.” That is the level of performance just above a person's present level.

Poor School Readiness Predicts*:

- Low level of academic achievement
 - High levels of retention in grade
 - Special Education placement
 - School dropout, often a predictor of:
 - Unemployment
 - Teen pregnancy
 - Juvenile delinquency
 - Social dependency
 - Poor parenting practices
- **Adopted from Carnegie Report, 1995*

Foundation for Learning

- Child rearing, child development, and learning are inextricably linked.
- Development starts early and must be a continuous process.
- Children's most meaningful learning occurs through positive and supportive relationship with caring and nurturing adults.
- Parents are children's first teachers
- All parent, staff and community member, regardless of social or economic status, have an important contribution to make in improving student education and their preparation for life.

Child Growth and Development

Pathways of development critical for academic learning

1. Physical
2. Cognitive
3. Psychological
4. Language
5. Social
6. Ethical

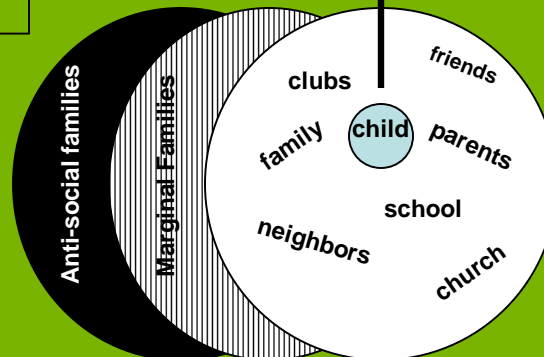
GOALS

1. To become well educated
2. To find a rewarding job/career
3. To be an effective family member and, if one chooses, a parent.
4. To become productive and responsible members of society.
5. To find meaning and satisfaction in life.

Children are Born With:

- Relationship capabilities
- Aggressive Energies
- Biological make ups

Children are born into social networks (SNW) with beliefs, attitudes, activities, life styles



Comer SDP

Healthy child development is
the keystone to academic
achievement and life
success

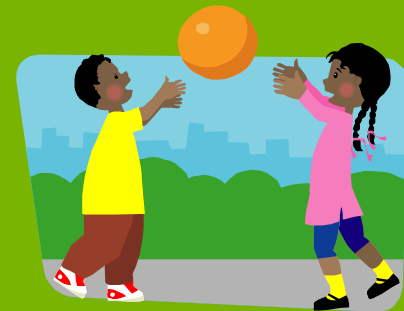
Dr. James P. Comer, Yale University

Developmental Pathways

- Physical
- Language
- Psychological
- Ethical
- Social
- Cognitive

Physical

- General health; hearing and vision
- Any question of toxicity or trauma
- Physical health
- Nutrition
- Responsible decision making
- Kinesthetic activities



Language

- Receptive language
- Expressive language
- Ability to process communications



Psychological

- Feelings of adequacy
- Ability to show emotions
- Acceptance of differences



Ethical

- Respect for the rights and integrity of self and others



Social

- Ability to be empathetic
- Ability to use communication in relationships
- Ability to interact with others who may be different



Cognitive

- Flexibility of thought
- Ability to manipulate information
- Ability to manipulate the environment



**Learning environments
should support children's
development along the
critical pathways**

Developmental Milestones

Activity One:

Activity One:

Directions: Using the materials at your table. Identify the developmental characteristics and the implications and strategies for teachers using the 6 developmental pathways.

Example

Physical Pathway Age 4

Typical Development

- Sometimes appear clumsy, awkward; spills and accidents are common
- Hand and fingers an extension of whole arm; i.e. fine motor skills not dominant
- Fisted pencil grasp typical

Implications and Strategies for Teachers

- Use hand to write, printing usually large
- Never have children copy from board
- Learning through large muscle play
- Easel and finger painting excellent for pre-writing; stand-up easel important for vision

When do I Raise the Red Flag



Points to Remember

- Children develop abilities at similar points
- There is a wide range of variability on what is “normal”
- No two children will develop the same in all pathways at the same time

Cause for Alarm

A child having trouble meeting many of the developmental milestones in multiple developmental pathways

Some Teacher Screeners

- Denver Prescreening Developmental Questionnaire
- Denver II
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 (ASQ-3)

Positives Attributes of the Screeners

- These assessments are completed by both parent and teachers
- The items are linked to developmental milestones
- They identify the child's strengths and areas of concern

Review Developmental Screeners

Activity Two

What's next after the
screener indicates
that there are delays
in more than one
domain?

Next Steps for 3-5 year olds

- Contact the Early Stages Office
- They help to identify any delays that a child may have
- They provide appropriate services to help address those delays
- These services are free to families that live in the District, whether the child attends a public school, private school, is home-schooled or has not

Delayed Cognitive Development

CAUSAL AGENTS INCLUDE LACK OF:

- Encouragement of Exploration
- Mentoring in Basic Skills
- Celebration of Developmental Advances
- Guided rehearsal and extension of new skills
- Protection from inappropriate disapproval, teasing, or punishment
- Rich and responsive language environment

Implications of Early Assessment & Intervention

- *Speech & language therapy* is indicated when a child is struggling to communicate
- *Occupational & physical therapy* assists with problems in motor areas and sensory integration
- *Behavior therapy* can help children master developmentally appropriate behaviors and adaptive skills
- *Psychological interventions* can assist in the expression and regulation of developmentally appropriate emotions

Resources

- Wood, C. (2007). Yardsticks Children in the Classroom Ages 4-14: A Resource for Parents and Teachers. Turnfalls, Massachusetts: Northeast Foundation for Children
- www.aboutourkids.org/families/newsletters
- www.mayoclinic.com
- www.ed.gov